

Town of Rowe – FY2013
Board of Selectmen – Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 13, 2013 – 4:00pm
Rowe Town Hall

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wilson at 4:00pm.

Present: Chairman Marilyn Wilson, Vice Chairman Paul McLatchy III, and Selectman Noel Abbott

Also Present: Town Coordinator Ellen Miller

Audience: Ron Gordon, Rosie Gordon

Minutes: Minutes of the February 6th were unanimously (3/0/0) approved as amended.

Upcoming Special State Elections: As a cost saving measure MGL, Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2013, was recently enacted which allows towns—by vote of the Board of Selectmen—to change their annual election for this year only to coincide with either the State Primary on April 30th, or the Special State Election on June 25th (if either of the dates is within 30 days of the town’s annual election). Several towns have voted to do so. The Rowe Board of Selectmen voted unanimously (3/0/0) to not change Rowe’s annual election date of May 18th, as the only option would be to move it up to April 30th, and the nomination paper schedule is already under way.

School Fire Purchase Orders: No new purchase orders have been received for review/approval. Ms. Miller did report that one purchase order approved last week was actually for an item that is paid annually by the Emergency Management Department. It was for Powers Generator Services for annual service on the emergency generator at the school. The bill is being forwarded to the town hall by the school department.

School Fire Treasury Warrant #13-17: The warrant this week has the second (final) payment to Hawlemont in the amount of \$37,016.25. The full invoice is coded to the School Fire Deficit account; however, most of the cost was to be borne by the Reg Sch K-6 line item, as the lease was to be paid by the current year maintenance budget. At the time the MOU was signed, it was calculated that perhaps \$8,000 or so of the second payment would come from the School Fire Deficit account. The remainder, along with the first payment, was to be paid by the regular school budget. Ms. Miller stated that when she emailed the school department reminding them that the second payment was due, she had asked Joanne Blier for the breakdown of the coding for this invoice, but did not hear back from her. Chairman Wilson stated that she also was awaiting an answer from Ms. Blier on this matter. The Select Board then agreed unanimously to remove the payment from this week’s warrant. Ms. Miller will inform the school department of their decision.

School Fire Expenditures to Date: To-date expenditures in the School Fire Deficit account amount to \$181K, as of this week’s treasury warrant. [This takes into account the removal of the Hawlemont payment mentioned above.]

Demolition of School Site: A question had arisen concerning the current condition of the school site—specifically, “has the site been condemned due to the presence of hazardous materials?” Ms. Miller passed this question on the Building Commissioner Jim Hawkins, but has not received a reply as of yet. She will contact him asking that we get an immediate response to this question.

Police Department Job Postings: Chairman Wilson presented draft job postings for a part-time (10 hours per week) Police Chief and part-time (8 hours per week) Police Officer. The drafts were approved, with the recommendation to add that graduation from the Police Academy be added as a requisite. Chairman Wilson suggested that she approach Gail May to fill see if she would fill in as temporary Administrative help to the Police Department, until such time as a long-term solution could be decided on. The Select Board agreed that this would be a good solution at this time. Ms. Wilson will contact Ms. May.

Emergency Generator: Chairman Wilson is still working on this. They Leyden Police Chief is assisting her in this matter.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): Pat Smith of FRCOG will attend the next Selectmen's meeting on February 20th to discuss the steps we need to take to join this program. Chairman Wilson reported that Planning Board Chairman David Roberson stated that he is of the opinion that the Board of Selectmen should not propel this item forward. However, MGL c.40A, Sec 5, which spells out the procedure for adopting or changing zoning by-laws, states that these changes in fact are proposed by city council or selectmen in writing to the planning board, who then must hold a public hearing within sixty-five days of submittal to the planning board (see MGL attached). Chairman Wilson further reported that Mr. Roberson stated he feels out of the loop. However, he has not been kept out of the loop. Selectman Abbott suggested that a formal letter be sent to the Planning Board to get this on their docket so that a public hearing can be held and the matter can then be presented at the Annual Town Meeting. He suggested this because at least two households in town are interested in obtaining flood insurance, but until the town joins the program, they are unable to do so. He stated it is the Select Board's civic duty to pursue this. Chairman Wilson agreed, but suggested that the Board wait until hearing the presentation by Pat Smith next week before sending the letter. It was unanimously agreed to wait until that time.

IT Review: Chairman Wilson has received a report from VeritechIT, but has not opened it yet. Selectmen Abbott requested a copy of the report. She will provide copies to the Select Board, and a copy to Ms. Miller for the meeting minutes.

Regional Fire Service: Fire Chief McLatchy had presented at last week's meeting a letter from the Franklin County Fire Chiefs Association seeking support from Chief Elected Officials and Executive Officers for the Towns and Fire Districts of Franklin County, to use available District Local Technical Assistance Fund (DLTA) to conduct a study on the regionalization of fire services within Franklin County (letter attached). The Board unanimously agreed that a letter be sent to the association stating that we are interested in learning more about this regionalization. Ms. Miller will send a letter, and will copy both the Select Board and Chief McLatchy.

RECESS: At 4:10pm Chairman Wilson called for a five-minute recess and asked Selectmen Abbott to join her in the Selectmen's Office.

RECONVENE: At 4:20pm the Select Board reconvened with all present.

Town Hall Door Locks: Chairman Wilson reported that both Town Clerk Jenn Morse and Treasurer Donna Flagg have requested that their doors be rekeyed for security reasons—as they have many important and confidential documents in their offices. She reported that they both state that they have seen entry into their offices not authorized by them. Ms. Miller then requested that her door be rekeyed also, as she has many important, sensitive, confidential documents in her office as well. She also suggested it would be a good time to have the outside doors rekeyed also, as it has been several years. The Select Board then voted unanimously (3/0/0) to have this rekeying done.

Snowmobile Use of Depot Street Bridge: No response received from MassDOT yet.

Post Office Request re PO Boxes: The Rowe Postal Service will be reducing their hours effective February 25th. They will only be open during the morning (Mon-Sat), and a 45 minute period in the afternoons (Mon-Fri). They would like all post office box holders to be able to access their boxes during at least the same hours they currently do. To achieve this they have decided to install exterior boxes (eliminating the interior boxes), and are requesting permission to install a set of four (4) sixteen-unit boxes directly behind the town hall, bolted into the sidewalk there. The Select Board decided that for safety reasons (traffic driving behind the building), this would not be a good location, and that locating them adjacent to the north parking lot by the Gracy House would be a better site. They could be placed perpendicular to Sibley Road at the east end of that lot. DPW Supt. Taylor stated that this would be a better location also. Ms. Miller will inform Tiffany Veber of the Rowe Post Office of their decision.

[Ms. Miller reported that Ms. Veber informed her that she will be transferring to the Northampton Post Office in the near future (early March), and that Guinevere Vanhorne will be taking over for Ms. Veber.]

ATM Warrant: It was agreed to close the warrant on Wednesday, April 24th. The following item will be included in the warrant.

- Adoption of MGL giving the Tax Collector sign-off approval on building permits and local licenses issued. The sign-off would attest that all real estate, personal property and motor vehicle taxes have been paid. Ms. Miller will obtain requirements and appropriate wording of articles.

It is possible that Articles to change some elected positions to appointed position [possibly Treasurer and Tax Collector positions] will be placed on the warrant. This will be researched further.

New School Vote: The School Building Committee would like to have this vote as soon as possible. It was discussed that perhaps the vote could be brought forward early on the ATM warrant. Vice Chairman McLatchy stated that he feels the vote should be held at a separate meeting. However, the Saturday following the ATM is the Annual Town Election, and the following Saturday after that is Memorial Day Weekend. It was discussed that perhaps at Special Town Meeting for the school vote could be held on a Wednesday evening (May 15th or 22nd?). This matter will be taken up at a later date.

Large Wind Turbine Moratorium: Chairman Wilson suggested that the town consider putting in place a moratorium or temporary ban on large wind turbine installations. Selectman Abbott stated that in NY state, you can only get bans for certain periods of time. They have expiration dates. This matter will be addressed at future meetings. [Note: A group in Heath—the Heath Wind Advisory Committee—is attempting to put in place a complete ban of such large systems.]


FY2014 Budget Worksheet: The Select Board began review of the FY2014 budget worksheet. The following budgets have not been received yet: Planning Board, School Committee, FRCOG assessments, FCCIP Building Inspection Program. The next budget meeting of the School Committee is Thursday, Feb 21st at 4:00pm. A memo was received from the Finance Committee with comments on the FY2014 budget.


Adjournment: The Selectboard voted unanimously (3/0/0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen B. Miller
Town Coordinator

Approved:


Marilyn Wilson, Chairman


Paul McLatchy III, Vice Chairman

(abstained)
Noel Abbott

Feb 20, 2013

Date Approved

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Email to Building Commissioner Jim Hawkins re status of school site
- Police Dept Draft Job Postings (2)
- Letter to Fire Chief's Association re regionalization of services
- Memo from Finance Committee